



Rhyncholaelia digbyana

There are but two species in the genus *Rhyncholaelia*. Both are indigenous to Mexico and Central America. One, *Rl. digbyana*, is found in somewhat dry forests and thickets at low elevations particularly in Mexico and Belize.

Both species were considered *Braassovola* until they were reclassified based on DNA evidence about 15 years ago. Both species have a thick textured semi terete leaf structure,

Digbyana puts out a pseudobulb about 4-6" long with a single leaf topping the pseudobulb. Typically it bears but one flower per inflorescence although occasionally a variety can be found that have two flowers.

The flower is heavily scented in the evening hours indicating that it is probably pollinated by moths. The scent is citrus, similar to lemons or limes. The most noticeable characteristic is the frilly large lip. The bloom itself is yellow to yellow-green, sometimes with a hint of pink in the sepals. Flowers are 6-7" wide and last about a week. Blooming time is irregular, but many bloom in late autumn.

Pictured is the variety, "Mrs. Chase" AM/AOS. Several years ago one of our past members had her plant awarded by the American Orchid Society with over 20 blooms.

Digbyana is best grown mounted or in a slatted basket. They can be planted in coarse bark or left without medium in the basket. Water heavily and fertilize weakly weekly when in active foliar growth. Reduce water after growth matures.

Rhyncholaelia is a genus where you can grow all members since they're only two. Grow *glauca* similarly, but with more water and humidity. You can even grow all of the primary hybrids. Since there are only two members of the genus, there can only be one primary hybrid, *Rl. Aristocrat* (*Rl. glauca* x *Rl. digbyana*), a truly spectacular white long lasting spring flower.